/255 cont./

843 and the embryo. The knots are very eloquent from this point of view.
789 And the "Mary's" in the mystical number of "three" represent another
[801] expression of the univeral-mother, in Christianized form, whose presence in this rite is particularly appropriate.

Nevertheless, the ideal fertility sought is that which will end in the birth of boys. That is why, when the bride, having arrived in front of the dwelling of her husband, dismounts from her horse, a boy whose parents are living mounts into the saddle and takes her place. Likewise, a small boy is put on the bride's lap. Thus, the young woman will give birth
[352] to boys. On the other hand, the young couple are forbidden to sit on the
[831] three-legged stool of the hearth, for its shape symbolizes the female sexual organ and it can bring them only girls. In these two cases, as in the preceding ones, it is no longer forces but other influences that work toward the desired result.

233 In order to promote the fertility of livestock, the Sarakatsani follow
825 /256/ procedures which are different from those already described, but
789 whose content points to the same beliefs. In this instance the procedures seek to promote the birth of females--the foundations of wealth and
[527] family prosperity. On Christmas day a young girl whose two parents are living makes the rounds of the huts of the Tséligato. Before each door she stops and speaks these words to the inhabitants who await for her to pass: "Good day. I wish you a long life. May the next year bring the
[514] birth of many ewes." The women of the family offer her sweets. When she leaves, the wives of the shepherds fill their tubs at a nearby spring and throw cheese and butter into it.

527 On New Year's day the first person to enter a Sarakatsani hut must be
233 a young girl who has two living parents and who holds in her hand holly
825 and feliki--the favorite food of goats and ewes. Once inside the hut, she
789 must sit down on the ground beside the hearth and toss her bouquet into the fire, which starts to crackle from the heat. Then the young girl,